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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 004596

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [SENV](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ON IMPORTANCE OF CLIMATE
CONTROL CONFERENCE; HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Burns. Reasons: 1.4 (b,d).

Summary

¶1. (C) On September 17, Deputy Foreign Minister Yakovenko told Ambassador of Foreign Minister Lavrov's interest in participating in the September 27 - 28 Washington energy security and climate change conference. Yakovenko provided the Ambassador with a non-paper outlining the MFA's traditional complaints about the annual International Religious Freedom report. The DFM lamented Congress's decision to end financial support for the Human Rights Commission and lobbied for continued USG participation. The Ambassador expressed strong concern about the closure of the Educated Media Foundation/Internews, and praised the work it had done with regional media in Russia. In response to the Ambassador's inquiry, Yakovenko insisted that the GOR was working hard to identify journalist Anna Politkovskaya's murderers. Ambassador brought the upcoming trial of scholar and commentator Andrey Piantkovskiy to Yakovenko's attention, with Yakovenko saying he was unaware of the case. End summary.

Climate Control Conference

¶2. (C) DFM Yakovenko opened his September 17 meeting with the Ambassador by describing Foreign Minister Lavrov's strong interest in participating, schedule permitting, in the September 27-28 Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change to be held in Washington. Attending the event, in addition to Lavrov, he said, would be Roshydromet Head Aleksandr Bedritskiy, who would also head the GOR delegation to the December UN Climate Change Conference in Bali.

International Religious Freedom Report

¶3. (C) The Ambassador described to Yakovenko the recently-released, annual International Religious Freedom report. Yakovenko thanked the Ambassador for the USG's efforts to produce an accurate, dispassionate analysis of the state of religious freedom in Russia, but nevertheless passed a non-paper objecting to a few aspects of the report, in particular:

- the description of the behavior of law enforcement personnel in the North Caucasus region;
- the "tendency" to attribute too much significance to European Court of Human Rights' decisions in evaluating Russia's performance.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador told Yakovenko that Embassy representatives would be delighted to discuss the report with their MFA counterparts. Yakovenko accepted the offer.

Human Rights Council

¶15. (C) The DFM urged USG participation in the Human Rights Council. He had been disappointed that the U.S. was reducing its financial support for the body by USD 3 million, and expressed his government's interest in a continued USG role. The Human Rights Council, said Yakovenko, needed the USG's active support to be effective, and he urged that the decision on funding be re-considered.

Carnegie - Lukin Human Rights Roundtable

¶16. (C) Yakovenko and the Ambassador welcomed the upcoming, inaugural session of the non-governmental human rights roundtable, between the Carnegie Center and HR Ombudsman Ambassador Lukin, which will be held in the U.S. on September 26-27.

Educated Media Foundation/Internews

¶17. (C) The Ambassador expressed USG dismay with the de facto closure of Educated Media Foundation/Internews as the result of the confiscation of its equipment and the charges leveled against its ex-President Manana Azlamyan. He described the constructive role EMF had played in developing regional media in Russia and underlined his unhappiness with the outcome. Yakovenko urged that the USG await the outcome of the on-going investigation. The Ambassador rebutted that the

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damage had already been done; and the organization shuttered.

Anna Politkovskaya

¶18. (C) Ambassador as well described USG interest in the progress of the investigation into the murder of journalist Anna Politkovskaya. Yakovenko said that the investigation was being energetically pursued and that the GOR was intent on finding the perpetrators. In response to a request from the Ambassador, Yakovenko promised to see if FM Lavrov would meet while in the U.S. with the widow of U.S. journalist Paul Klebnikov.

Piontkovskiy Extremism Trial

¶19. (C) Ambassador brought to Yakovenko's attention USG concern with the upcoming Moscow trial of commentator and scholar Andrey Piantkovskiy on charges of extremism. (Passages from articles and books Piantkovskiy has written have been alleged to be extremist and he has been brought to trial in Krasnodar --that process is ongoing-- and will face trial in Moscow on September 25.) The Ambassador noted that one index of the trial's significance was that many well-known public figures, some with views radically different from those of Piontkovskiy, were scheduled to appear as witnesses on his behalf. Yakovenko was unaware of the case.

Yakovenko's Travel Plans

¶10. (C) In a brief review of his own schedule, Yakovenko said he would be traveling to New York with Foreign Minister Lavrov, where he would be among other things lobbying for Russian's re-election to the UNESCO Executive from the Second Electoral Group. During his two weeks in New York, Yakovenko also planned extensive consultations with UN personnel.

